

PATENT

Attorney Docket No. A-69466-3/RBC/VEJ
Attorney Matter No. 470900-00029
Application No. 10/672,766

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims.

1-120. (Canceled)

121. (Previously presented) A method of forming a sheet of material for bending along a bend line comprising the step of:

forming a plurality of bending strap-defining structures in the sheet of material which are positioned relative to the bend line to define at least one bending strap in the sheet of material having a central longitudinal strap axis oriented to obliquely extend across the bend line, the strap-defining structures being configured and positioned with edge-to-face engagement of the material to produce bending of the sheet of material along the bend line.

122. (Original) The method as defined in claim 121 wherein, the forming step is accomplished by forming the strap-defining structures as slits extending through the sheet of material.

123. (Original) The method as defined in claim 122 wherein, the forming step is accomplished by forming the slits to have a kerf dimension and jog distance causing edge-to-face engagement of the sheet of material on opposite sides of the slits during bending of the sheet of material.

124. (Original) The method as defined in claim 121 wherein, the forming step is accomplished by forming the slits as elongated arcuate slits.

125. (Original) The method as defined in claim 124 wherein, the forming step is accomplished by forming the arcuate slits to have convex sides facing the bend line.

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126-129. (Canceled)

130. (Original) The method as defined in claim 121 wherein,
the forming step is accomplished by forming the strap-defining structures to define straps having a width dimension which increases in both directions along a longitudinal strap axis from about a midpoint of the length of the strap.

131. (Original) The method as defined in claim 121 wherein,
the forming step is accomplished by forming the strap-defining structures as arcuate slits defining tongues on a concave side of the arcuate slits displaced out of the plane of the sheet of material before bending.

132. (Original) The method as defined in claim 122 wherein,
during the forming step, forming the slits as arcuate slits alternating on opposite sides of the bend line with convex sides of the arcuate slits facing the bend line.

133. (Original) A method as defined in claim 121 wherein,
during the forming step, each slit is formed with slit end portions diverging away from the bend line, with a pair of longitudinally adjacent slit end portions on opposite sides of the bend line defining the bending strap extending across the bend line, and during the forming step, forming the slits with a kerf width dimensioned producing interengagement of the sheet of material on opposite sides of the slits during bending.

134-147. (Canceled)

148. (Currently amended) A method ~~[[as set forth in claim 134]]~~ of slitting a sheet of material for bending along a bend line comprising the steps of:
selecting a solid sheet of material for slitting; and

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forming a plurality of slits along a desired bend line with alternate slits along the bend line being positioned on alternating sides of the bend line and during the forming step, forming each slit with a central portion substantially parallel to and offset laterally from the bend line and with arcuate slit end portions on each end of the slit curving away from the bend line so that adjacent pairs of arcuate slits define bending straps extending obliquely across the bend line with increasing strap width dimensions on both sides of a minimum width dimension, said minimum width extending obliquely across the bend line;

wherein ~~[[;]]~~ the forming step is accomplished by selecting a minimum width dimension for the bending straps which is in the range of about 0.5 to about 4 times the thickness of the sheet of material being bent.

149. (Original) A method as set forth in claim 148 wherein,
the selecting step is accomplished by selecting a minimum width of the bending straps to be between 0.7 to 2.5 times the thickness of the material being bent.

150-151. (Canceled)

152. (Currently amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A method ~~[[as defined in claim 134]]~~ of slitting a sheet of material for bending along a bend line comprising the steps of:
selecting a solid sheet of material for slitting; and
forming a plurality of slits along a desired bend line with alternate slits along the bend line being positioned on alternating sides of the bend line and during the forming step, forming each slit with a central portion substantially parallel to and offset laterally from the bend line and with arcuate slit end portions on each end of the slit curving away from the bend line so that adjacent pairs of arcuate slits define bending straps extending obliquely across the bend line with increasing strap width dimensions on both sides of a minimum width dimension, said minimum width extending obliquely across the bend line;

wherein ~~[[;]]~~ the steps of selecting the sheet of material and forming a plurality of slits are accomplished to produce only elastic deformation of the sheet of material during bending.

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153-208. (Canceled)

AMENDMENT AND REPLY

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